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Bronsky, Amy

Illiteracy and
Americanization

Madison, Wis.

1917

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ILLITERACY
and
AMERICANIZATION

308

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Box 61

PREPARED BY
AMY BRONSKY
Supervisor of City Grades

Issued by
C. P. CARY
State Superintendent

Madison, Wis.
1917

ILLITERACY AND AMERICANIZATION.

If it were brought to our attention that there are people on all sides of us living in narrow dark houses from which sunlight is completely excluded and if we saw clearly that these dwellers in the dark are limited in their usefulness and enjoyment of light, if as we grasped these facts we should learn that it is possible for us to transform their cramped narrow houses into spacious ones and flood them with the sun's light, warmth and cheer there are few of us who would remain apathetic to this knowledge. There would be a quick and generous response to it and presently the dark houses would be replaced by bright, cheerful ones occupied by more capable, useful and hopeful people. Such a condition confronts us. There are in Wisconsin more than 57,000 people occupying dark houses,—they are the houses of their spirits into which the white light of hope with its promise of growth and progress does not enter. The windows through which it should enter are darkened by the blinds of ignorance for the dwellers in these houses are illiterates doomed to the bondage of illiteracy until their more fortunate neighbors release them from it. Are we ready to undertake this work? Closely connected with it is another obligation that of Americanizing our alien population.

A nation wide movement has been inaugurated recently for this purpose as well as to extend educational advantages to those who have been denied them and to those whose opportunities have been very limited. These groups include both foreign born and native Americans. They include the illiterate and the literate. It is on the one hand an effort to increase the efficiency of all classes and on the other an effort to Americanize our foreign born residents.

This movement is fostered by the Federal Bureau of Immigration. It is true that in a number of communities the work had been undertaken prior to the Federal Government's interest but it is equally true that the activity of the latter has given it a great impetus.

The history of this Federal activity briefly is that the naturalization courts were finding it necessary to reject or to continue the cases of nearly 35 per cent of those who came up for citizenship on account of general ignorance of the applicants or because of their lack of knowledge of our government. In addition to this large percentage found wanting the courts admitted, regardless of their lack of educational qualifications, another large percentage because they were in-

clined to believe that these applicants were deserving.¹ These facts impressed upon the Bureau of Naturalization as well as upon the courts the appallingly large number of people in need of educational opportunities and in need of training in citizenship. The Bureau reasoned that since the Government provides that no court admit an alien to citizenship until it is satisfied that he is *attached* to the principles of the Constitution that it is the Government's duty to see that provision is made to instruct aliens in these principles in order that the spirit of the provision may become effective.

This is but part of the work that the Bureau of Naturalization saw before it. It saw in addition to this that there are large numbers of resident aliens making no attempt to secure citizenship. The records for one city showed that of those attending night school only 80 per cent had taken steps to secure it.² As these students probably represented the most ambitious of the newcomers it is safe to assume that this percentage was not larger than that existing among the larger groups of aliens not attending night school. Various investigations confirmed the fact that vast numbers of newcomers are indifferent to the privileges and duties of citizenship and that it is clearly the responsibility of each community to instruct its aliens and awaken in them a desire for citizenship. "No nation is larger than its sense of citizenship," and the United States has in the past suffered a great social loss in that it has allowed large numbers of resident aliens to live here and has made no effort to interest them in becoming a part of the body politic. The cooperation that the Bureau of Naturalization is seeking to establish with the public schools in the matter of giving educational advantages to petitioners for citizenship will of itself react upon those of longer residence here who are indifferent to the privileges and duties of citizenship.

The Bureau attempts to establish this cooperation by furnishing public school authorities with monthly lists of applicants for citizenship in all communities where there is an alien population large enough to justify the establishment of schools for them. These lists include also the names of the wives of the petitioners and declarants for the Government now recognizes wives as prospective citizens and is desirous of instructing and Americanizing them as well as their husbands. The attempt to do this is one of the most far-reaching of the endeavors that has yet been made to establish American ideals among our foreign born population.

Letters are sent by the Bureau of Naturalization to citizenship applicants and their wives telling them of the advantages that would accrue from their attendance at school. It is expected that the local schools by various means will follow up these letters and bring to

¹From address of W. M. Ragsdale, Chief Naturalization Examiner, Pittsburgh, Pa. (In Proceedings of First Citizenship Convention p. 23, U. S. Bur. of Naturalization.)

²Work of the Public Schools with Bureau of Naturalization, p. 16, U. S. Bulletin, (Bureau of Naturalization, 1917).

the attention of the recipients the opportunities that the schools offer them. As a result of the cooperation between the Federal Government and local schools 650 cities throughout the country at large have already organized classes to teach citizenship to adult foreigners and other cities are at present organizing them.³ It is impossible to estimate the extent of the benefits that have resulted because of this work. From an interest in the needs of future citizens and nonEnglish speaking aliens this has developed an interest in another phase of the Americanization problem, namely, that of extending education to illiterates and near-illiterates.

In the past employers of labor have sometimes opposed efforts to educate the illiterate anticipating as one outcome that higher wages would be demanded. Today the most enlightened employers are favoring better schooling and are even making provision to have educational opportunities offered to their employees, on the premises where they work. They are doing this not only because they recognize the importance of the resulting social gain but quite as much from a business point of view because it has been shown that a low wage laborer is not a cheap laborer and that there is a loss incurred by employing ignorant labor even when the work involves nothing but mechanical and repetitive operations. In addition to this there is a greater risk to life, limb and property when ignorant labor is employed. For these reasons the payment of a higher wage to less ignorant labor is not a more costly policy. Witness the action of a large manufacturing plant which offers a wage increase of two cents an hour to its employees who learn to speak English. In the Ford Manufacturing plant alone after schools were established for the workers accidents decreased 54 per cent. Such facts as these have changed the attitude of the employer who considered illiterate labor cheap. So that in a number of cases manufacturers now perceive the industrial advantage to themselves and their employees and pay them for the time they attend extension classes.

To illustrate how both employers and employees are benefited by raising the educational standards of the worker the following statement is quoted from Adult Illiteracy.⁴ "In a workers class that was established for illiterate girls in a certain New York factory it was found that they gained from 20 to 70 per cent in working efficiency and the girls themselves not only attained new hopefulness, ambition and courage but increased their earnings from an average of 19.5 cents per hour to 22.2 cents per hour while the earnings of those who could not avail themselves of the class instruction remained practically unchanged."

This shows what we may consider individual gain,—gain to individual employer and individual worker. We must consider more than

³From address of Raymond F. Crist Deputy Commissioner of Naturalization, In Proceedings of First Citizenship Convention, p. 7, U. S. Bulletin, Bureau of Naturalization, 1917.

⁴U. S. Bureau of Education, Bulletin 35, 1916, p. 58.

this, however, and keep in mind the gain to society at large. This we see in establishments where high grade labor is employed and well paid. These contented, ambitious, law respecting laborers form a marked contrast to those who are found in industrial centers where a high percentage of illiteracy prevails. It is noteworthy that such centers "are especially subject to costly and prolonged labor difficulties; notable examples have been Lawrence, Mass., Patterson, N. J. and the Colorado mining districts."² When we recall these and similar disturbances we need no further argument to convince us of the wisdom of doing away with illiteracy.

The task is not as difficult as it at first glance may appear. The old theory that adults learn to read and write very slowly has been displaced for experience in teaching them has proven that this is not the case. Studies have been made of the length of time required by non-English speaking illiterates to learn to read and write and it has been found that "It is possible for any person of ordinary intelligence who has never learned to read or write in any language and who can speak no English to acquire a good working knowledge of six hundred English words, ease in reading common prose, legible penmanship, and knowledge of simple arithmetic. The time required is sixty hours or one hour a day for twelve weeks, five days a week."³

Only sixty hours needed to transfer a non-English speaking illiterate to the English speaking literate class and yet according to the last Federal Census Statistics (1910) Wisconsin has 57,709 illiterates over ten years of age and 120,665 non-English speaking residents over ten years of age.

Regardless of the fact that efforts have been put forth to reduce this number it is probable that in the interval that has elapsed since 1910 it has been growing larger rather than smaller for the early years of the present decade brought many more immigrants to this country and Wisconsin received its full quota.

The following table compiled from Federal reports shows the classification according to occupation of incoming immigrants who stated Wisconsin as their intended future residence.

Year	Total No. stating Wisconsin as their intended future residence	Professional	Skilled	Miscellaneous	No occupation (including women and children)
1911	14,612	120	2,045	7,830	4,689
1912	14,616	123	1,615	7,751	4,727
1913	23,691	153	2,369	14,104	6,474
1914	30,690	157	2,343	12,021	6,139
1915	3,550	76	575	1,714	1,485
1916	2,302	64	322	1,228	978
Total	78,822	693	9,360	44,627	24,242

² Adult Illiteracy, p. 21.

³ Adult Illiteracy, page 41. U. S. Bureau of Education, 1916, No. 35.

It is safe to assume that there were many illiterates among the 24,242 new comers who professed no occupation, as well as among the 44,627 miscellaneous workers.

How does Wisconsin's illiteracy problem compare with that existing in other parts of the country? Its percentage of illiteracy (3.2) is lower than that of the country at large, (7.7) due not so much to the fact that means have been found to combat adult illiteracy but rather to the fact that some of the southern states show very high percentages because the standards of their compulsory education laws are low and low as they are they have not been adequately enforced. Conditions there being so different from ours it is not profitable to compare the situations but a comparison is here offered with states in which conditions more nearly resemble those in Wisconsin.

*Illiteracy in the Population Ten Years of Age and Over,
(U. S. Census, 1910)*

Illinois	3.7%	168,594
Michigan	3.3%	74,800
Ohio	3.2%	124,774
Wisconsin	3.2%	57,709
Minnesota	3.0%	49,336
Iowa	1.7%	29,889

Iowa, as it is seen, runs a low percentage, the lowest in the United States. It is not expecting the impossible to aim to do away entirely with illiteracy. In the Scandinavian countries it is said to be practically nonexistent. So little exists that no statistics are secured on the subject. This statement is substantiated by the fact that the percentage of illiteracy among Scandinavian immigrants to the United States is smaller than that of any other group of immigrants.¹

It should be stated to the credit of each of these states that it had reduced its illiteracy greatly in the 20 years preceding the last federal census. Wisconsin led this group in this respect as is shown in the following table:

*Percentage Decrease of Illiteracy in 20 Years, 1890-1910.
(Adult Illiteracy, page 10.)*

Wisconsin	58%
Iowa	53%
Minnesota	50%
Michigan	45%
Ohio	38%
Illinois	28%

Wisconsin may be justly proud of its record for it was excelled by only two other sections of the country, the District of Columbia, where the reduction was 62%, and Kansas, where it was 60%. Will Wisconsin's record for the period of 1910-1920 again place her in the foremost ranks?

¹ Abstract of Report of Immigration Commissioner, 1910-11, vol. I, p. 178.

This 58% reduction, admirable as it is, affected largely the group of people coming under school age and was brought about by better compulsory attendance laws and a more strict enforcement of them. Undoubtedly the state of Massachusetts, which shows a much smaller percentage of reduction (16%) for this same period, really corrected illiteracy of those beyond the compulsory school age more than did our state, for Massachusetts has had a law upon her statute books for nearly thirty years requiring illiterate minors over 14 years of age to attend some school if they lived for a year in a city or town maintaining an evening school. To meet this requirement Massachusetts now defines the standard of literacy to mean such ability to read and write as is required for completion of the fourth grade.¹ This is far above the ordinary interpretation of literacy which usually amounts to ability to write one's own name and ordinary simple words.

Since on the whole Wisconsin has done very little to reduce the illiteracy of adults and minors beyond school age this is the problem that now faces us. The first measure that must be undertaken is that of locating them. Examination of our state by counties shows that the 57,769 illiterates ten years of age and over are distributed as follows:

(U. S. Census, 1910.)

Counties	Illiterate	Percentage	Counties	Illiterate	Percentage
Adams	149	2.3	Marathon	1,163	2.9
Ashland	945	5.5	Marquette	1,596	6.3
Barron	559	2.5	Marquette	370	4.4
Bayfield	332	3.0	Milwaukee	12,255	3.5
Brown	2,867	7.0	Monroe	465	2.9
Buffalo	312	2.4	Oconto	1,435	7.7
Burnett	225	3.3	Oneida	369	4.2
Calumet	108	0.8	Outagamie	1,901	2.9
Clark	1,247	5.0	Ozaukee	374	2.8
Chippewa	940	4.2	Peppin	106	1.9
Columbia	215	1.2	Pierce	486	2.8
Crawford	306	2.4	Polk	477	3.4
Dane	1,063	1.8	Portage	1,716	7.5
Dodge	913	2.4	Priest	243	2.4
Door	706	5.0	Racine	1,247	2.7
Douglas	1,084	2.9	Richland	441	3.9
Dunn	286	3.5	Rock	824	1.8
Eau Claire	681	2.6	Rusk	708	2.5
Florence	141	5.4	St. Croix	354	1.7
Fond du Lac	704	1.7	Sauk	645	2.4
Forest	195	4.0	Sawyer	420	9.0
Grant	569	1.8	Shawano	1,292	5.5
Green	304	1.8	Shoebogyan	1,622	2.4
Green Lake	619	5.1	Taylor	302	3.1
Iowa	269	1.7	Trempealeau	384	2.3
Iron	259	4.8	Vilas	468	2.2
Jackson	542	4.1	Walworth	440	9.7
Jefferson	233	0.8	Washington	285	1.2
Juneau	590	3.8	Washburn	148	2.5
Kenosha	1,147	4.4	Waushara	255	1.8
Kewaunee	1,287	9.8	Waukesha	490	1.0
La Crosse	1,156	2.2	Waupaca	657	2.6
Lafayette	386	2.4	Winnebago	908	2.1
Langlade	331	2.6	Wood	1,222	2.4
Lincoln	233	1.8		634	2.8
Manitowoc	913	2.6	Total	57,769

¹ Public Facilities for Educating the Alien, p. 13.

The percentage of illiteracy in Wisconsin counties among those ten years of age and over arranged according to a descending scale is as follows:

Counties	Percentage	Counties	Percentage
Kewaunee	9.8	Racine	2.7
Vilas	9.7	Eau Claire	2.6
Sawyer	9.0	Langlade	2.6
Oconto	7.7	Manitowoc	2.6
Portage	7.5	Waupaca	2.6
Brown	7.0	Barron	2.5
Marquette	6.3	Rusk	2.5
Ashland	5.5	Washburn	2.5
Shawano	5.5	Crawford	2.4
Florence	5.4	Dodge	2.4
Chippewa	5.1	Lafayette	2.4
Green Lake	5.1	Pike	2.4
Door	5.0	Sauk	2.4
Iron	4.8	Shoebogyan	2.4
Kenosha	4.4	Winnebago	2.4
Marquette	4.4	Adams	2.3
Oneida	4.3	Vernon	2.2
Clark	4.2	Waushara	2.1
Jackson	4.1	Buffalo	2.0
Forest	4.0	Monroe	2.0
Juneau	3.8	Polk	1.9
Dunn	3.5	Dane	1.8
Milwaukee	3.5	Grant	1.8
Burnett	3.3	Green	1.8
Trempealeau	3.3	Lincoln	1.8
La Crosse	3.2	Rock	1.8
Taylor	3.1	Fond du Lac	1.7
Barfield	3.0	Iowa	1.7
Pike	3.0	St. Croix	1.7
Richland	3.0	Waushara	1.6
Douglas	2.9	Washington	1.3
Marathon	2.9	Columbia	1.2
Outagamie	2.9	Walworth	1.2
Ozaukee	2.9	Chisago	0.8
Pierce	2.8	Jefferson	0.8
Wood	2.8		

It must be remembered that closely allied to this illiterate class is another that may be known as near-illiterates. A very limited ability to read and write has put them into the literate class, but for all practical purposes they are as much in need of schooling as are the illiterates.

In addition to these two groups is a third composed of those who are unable to speak English. Earlier reference to these has listed Wisconsin's number over ten years of age as 120,665. Many of these are literate for they come from countries where education is prized and they had therefore learned to read and write in their own language, but there are others of this number who are illiterate, 43,662 in all.¹ These as well as the non-English speaking literates should acquire a reading and speaking knowledge of English. The fact that we are satisfied to allow 120,665 foreigners to settle among us without acquiring a knowledge of our language when Federal regulations demand

¹ Public Facilities for Educating the Alien, page 33.

ability to read and speak English before citizenship may be conferred means that we are remiss in our duty of interesting our alien residents in becoming citizens. When we consider that 88.5 of the foreign speaking immigrants arriving in this country are over 19 years of age and thus beyond the influence of the public day school we realize that it is imperative for us to establish schools in which they may be taught English and citizenship so that they may be properly amalgamated. The last statistics showed that only 1.3% of the foreign born whites over 21 years of age attend school.² We are helped to a keener appreciation of the interest that a community should take in teaching English to its foreign speaking residents by reference to a situation which occurred in Detroit in the winter of 1914-15. Twenty-three thousand unemployed workmen applied to the Board of Commerce for work,—15,000 could not speak English. Work could not be found for the non-English speaking people and they and their families were public charges during the winter. This led Detroit business men to conclude that the teaching of English and the assimilation of the immigrant is a civic necessity rather than welfare work. Teachers especially should be interested in teaching English to foreign born families for there is a direct relation between their lack of knowledge of English and the progress of their children in school. The greatest number of cases of retardation occur among children coming from homes where no English is spoken.

A summary then of the group for whom night school should be established gives non-English speaking foreigners, applicants for citizenship, illiterates, near-illiterates and those who are desirous of extending their education.

What has Wisconsin done in the way of establishing extension schools for those whose needs are not met by day schools?

Its law provides for the establishment of continuation schools which must reach boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 17 who have left school to engage in occupations other than agriculture or domestic service. These schools may and do reach people beyond the 17 year age limit.

Every community of over 5000 inhabitants *must* and every one of less than 5000 *may* have an industrial education board a part of whose duties shall be the fostering, establishing and maintaining of continuation schools, holding day and evening sessions. Such schools must be established on petition of 25 persons qualified to attend them.

Thirty-one Wisconsin cities have continuation schools and night sessions are conducted in connection. These cities in a number of cases make special efforts to enroll adults who are in need of schooling. This endeavor is a feature which needs development and extension.

Our smaller communities and rural sections have recently been putting forth an effort in this matter and some good work has been ac-

²Public Facilities for Educating the Alien, page 10.

complished. In our northern mining section schools for adults have been stated by public school authorities as well as by mining companies and church organizations.

In another county a line of work has been initiated which grew quite naturally from the State Reading Circle movement. Teachers in several districts had combined to form a reading circle. Later they enrolled the children in their respective districts in such circles and then came the request from the people of one district that they be included in similar work. Under the direction of the county superintendent such a reading group was formed and the members met for reading and discussion. A list of books was compiled and it was decided that the county superintendent, upon satisfactory evidence that six of these had been read, would present the reader with a diploma recording this accomplishment. It is of interest to know that in this small section 104 diplomas were granted and 24 of these went to people who were above school age. In addition to this some bought books, others subscribed for magazines and much good resulted. Aside from the personal benefit resulting to individuals the superintendent reported an awakened interest in the school which manifested itself materially by such evidence as extending the study of music in the school and purchasing a piano.

The work that has been done in our rural sections corresponds somewhat to the splendid work that has been accomplished in the Moonlight Schools of the South.¹ As yet classes for adults in rural sections of Wisconsin have been few rather than many. It remains only for our country residents and school people to realize the possibilities and the resulting activity will be proportionate to the needs. *If Kentucky could so marvelously reduce its illiteracy, if one county in Georgia (Tatnall) could in a short time reduce its number of illiterates from 1835 to 50, if North Carolina could in one month of moonlight schools teach 10,000 illiterates to read and write, surely in Wisconsin we should attack our problem and transfer to the literate class every illiterate whom it is possible to teach. How shall we go about this?*

The first thing to be done is to show the need for such work and to create sentiment favoring the establishing of such classes. A local survey should be made to determine the number of people in need of this schooling. The social center work that has been so successfully conducted throughout the state has accustomed the public to the evening use of the school plant and awakened an interest in group discussion and study. In so far as it has done this it has prepared people for the introduction of night schools.

The work of the continuation schools has also helped for it has prepared people to consider favorably the extension of schooling to the worker. It now remains for us to make the urgency of adult needs felt

¹For detailed accounts of these schools see: "Illiteracy in the U. S. and an Experiment for its Elimination," U. S. Bureau of Education, Bulletin 1913, No. 20.

and to get the work established. One of the most effective ways of doing this is to bring convincingly before employers the economical gain and increased industrial efficiency that will follow. Communities must be convinced of the necessity for the work so that appropriations may be made and teachers secured. Until this is carried as part of the regular school program schools and private organizations should demonstrate its need by conducting it as volunteer work. It is frequently possible to secure people other than public school teachers who are sufficiently public spirited to give their services as teachers if the matter is brought to their attention. In communities where the regular work of teachers is very heavy there is a decided advantage in utilizing community workers for the volunteer service. Frail classroom teachers as well as those whose work is very arduous should be discouraged from undertaking night school work.

Through what agencies may day and night schools for adults be established?

Public Schools
Manufacturing Plants
Boards of Commerce
Y. M. & Y. W. C. A.
Women's Clubs
Church Organizations
Fraternal Societies
Associated Charities

Publicity.

Through whatever agency this work is undertaken the attendance will depend largely upon the advertising which it receives. By well planned advertising during the month preceding the opening of night schools the city of Detroit increased its attendance 153 per cent. It utilized every available source in its effort to interest people and to make known the opportunities and benefits to be derived from attendance.

How to Advertise.

Utilize the daily papers. Have notices in foreign languages as well as in English. If foreign language papers are circulated in the town have notices inserted in these.

Send to the U. S. Bureau of Education for its posters designed to advertise these schools. These are printed in English and also in foreign languages. Display posters in conspicuous places that are frequented by the people whom it is desired to reach.

Secure the cooperation of the clergy of foreign churches and have them explain the matter to their congregations.

Secure the cooperation of committees of foreigners.

Explain the object to the pupils in the regular school and encourage them to invite their parents and older brothers and sisters to attend.

Send personal letters to the foreign-born parents of school children inviting them.

Utilize moving picture theaters to show slides announcing evening schools.

Send circular letters to employers, labor organizations, foreigners' clubs and societies, etc.

Urge those attending these schools to bring their friends.

Public schools upon the receipt of the names of applicants and declarants for citizenship from the Bureau of Naturalization should get into touch with these people and send them personal invitations to attend school.

Night or Day Classes.

Class time should be determined with the convenience and needs of the workers in mind. Night classes are necessary for they meet the needs of those who cannot attend during the day and they give an opportunity to ambitious workers who have been denied educational opportunities. It has been found, however, that they reach the studious-minded rather than the illiterate and the country or small town dweller rather than the city worker. The reason appears to be that the latter is nervously exhausted after his day's work. Though his hours are shorter, conditions under which he works are not so good and he fails to get the most from the evening class. For this reason workers' daytime classes are recommended for cities. They have been established in many places and results have been very satisfactory. The industrial management allows the employee time for instruction during the day without loss of wage while the public school furnishes the teacher and equipment.

Day classes should be established for foreign-born women. In the past one sad aspect of the Americanization of the growing children of the family has been that they too frequently came to feel superior to their parents. The movement that the government has initiated to Americanize wives of applicants for citizenship should receive cooperation from schools and women's clubs and afternoon classes should be organized to teach English and homemaking.

Summer Sessions.

Summer sessions are advocated where the yearly number of incoming foreigners is large enough to warrant them. They are particularly desirable in such centers as the summer months are periods of great immigration and during the first few of sojourn here the newcomers are unusually susceptible to Americanizing influences.

Number of Sessions Per Week.

The number varies throughout the country from one to six. It has been found, however, that it is not advisable to have the same group of pupils more than three evenings a week and that it is best to alternate the evenings giving the preference to Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The most common time for night school is from 7:30 to 9:30;

the next in general adoption is 7:00 to 9:00 and the next 7:30 to 9:00.

Afternoon classes for women are offered two or three days a week from one and a half to two hours each to suit the convenience of the women. If the work is purely academic a two hour session is longer than necessary. When home making subjects are included the two hour session has been found best.

It is suggested that one evening a month be set aside as a social evening and that suitable entertainment be planned for this. Such meetings afford an excellent opportunity to secure from our foreign born the valuable contribution that the old world should make to their social life in this country. In the past we have been indifferent to this but of late years we have come to see that the social life of our people would be maintained on a higher plane if we adopted the best of the old world social customs that the newcomers bring with them.

Size of Classes.

In villages and cities fifteen pupils in regular attendance is under ordinary conditions a minimum number for a class, while from 20 to 25 pupils in regular attendance is recommended as the number which can most effectively be taught by the average teacher. In rural communities it is well worth while to undertake this work even though the regular attendance is considerably lower than fifteen.

Course of Study.

In preparing the course of study help may be secured from the course issued by the Bureau of Naturalization entitled "An Outline Course in Citizenship." This outline is not confined to civics but provides for all the common branches and includes also a homemakers' course.

Further help may be secured from "Standards and Methods in the Education of Immigrants." Part I deals with legislation, Part II with instruction and Part III with organization and administration. This may be secured from the U. S. Bureau of Education. "Syllabus of a Tentative Course in Elementary Civics for Immigrants." U. S. Bureau of Education.

"Course in Citizenship." Detroit Board of Commerce, Detroit, Michigan.

"Outline of Lessons for Industrial, Commercial, Continuation and Evening Schools." Bulletins of Wisconsin State Board of Industrial Education.

Textbooks.

A list issued by the U. S. Bureau of Education is appended to this pamphlet.

The Bureau of Naturalization has in preparation a textbook suited to the needs of prospective citizens. Undoubtedly this will be useful in other classes for adults.

Use freely the daily paper. Have members bring the day's issue and read and discuss suitable articles.

Simple biographies of famous Americans are most appropriate as are also suitable books in Civics and American History.

In rural communities recourse should be had to the traveling library.

Keeping Up Attendance.

Where night schools have been conducted it has frequently been found that interest is easily lost and that attendance is irregular. It is probable that the falling away noted in the larger cities is due in large part to the fact before mentioned, namely, that of nervous exhaustion after a day's confining work. If this is found to be the case night classes for these workers must give way to workers' day classes. The following is quoted from the bulletin on "The Work of Public Schools with the Bureau of Naturalization," page 10: "The greatest difficulty next to securing the enrollment of adult students was to secure regular and continued attendance until some material benefit should result beyond a more or less crude ability to write our tongue. The average attendance as compared with the enrollment was found to have been very low especially in the largest centers. The Bureau therefore advocated in its correspondence with the supporting organizations that prizes be offered for papers and debates upon different Americanization subjects by these students; that public recognition of citizenship be given with the presentation of certificates of graduation and naturalization and the award of the prizes. These were believed to be legitimate inducements to be offered by the public schools and the public generally to secure higher proficiency and larger attendance. It is gratifying that a very general support has been given these projects."

A number of cities report that they have secured more regular attendance by requiring a \$2.00 deposit at the beginning of the session and making its return to the depositor at the close, dependent upon his percentage of attendance.

There is another possible explanation of the falling away in attendance and that is that the schools do not yield satisfaction to these adult students. From the start it is important that they be made to feel that the work is worth while and that they are benefiting from it. This again emphasizes the importance of a course of study arranged to meet the needs of each group and likewise emphasizes the importance of securing interested and able teachers.

Grouping.

The grouping of students in extension classes is sometimes a perplexing problem. The following suggestions are offered by the U. S. Bureau of Education in its Immigrant Education Letter, No. 3:

Principals and teachers find difficulty in properly organizing classes of foreigners: i. e., in grouping the right nationalities, ages, abilities,

etc., together. The following suggestions have been prepared to show the order of procedure and the most approved principles of classification. The Bureau recommends that school superintendents make additional copies of these suggestions and place in the hands of all principals and teachers interested in foreign pupils.

I. GROUPING OF PUPILS:

- A. Individual record of pupils should be taken first, including name, address, occupation, occupation in old country, education here and abroad, home and marital relationships, etc. This material will give a personal contact and provide a basis for conversation at once.
- B. Basis of Grouping, where numbers are sufficient, should be as follows:

1. **Relative ability to speak English** is the first test. *Beginners' classes* should be made up of pupils who speak no English or very little. *Intermediate classes* should be made up of pupils who speak some English well, or considerable English rather badly, or who have had some school or private training in the language. *Advanced classes* should be made up of pupils who speak considerable English well, and who wish to acquire fluency and perfection. This class should give some attention to the literary elements of the English language.
2. **Nationality** is the second basis for grouping. In the beginners' class pupils of the same nationality should be placed together where the number is adequate to make up a class. Where inadequate, nationalities of the same common origin should be grouped together, for example, (a) Italian, French, and Spanish; (b) German, Dutch, Bavarian, etc. Pupils are lost and language difficulties increased through careless mixing of nationalities in beginners' classes. The problem is especially important at the present time because of the war.
3. **Previous education** is the third test. Where numbers are sufficient, illiterates should be separated from the literate pupils. Illiterate aliens are more difficult to teach and create additional problems in teaching. If placed with trained pupils the latter are retarded. Highly educated pupils also should be separated from the poorly educated. Faster progress will be made through the separation of such types.
4. **Incidental tests** are mentality, age, and sex. Mentally bright and alert pupils should not be placed with dull and lazy ones. Old and young can well be separated, while if there is a large number of women in a school, they ought to be placed in a class alone and given special instruction.

- C. Regrouping should be practiced frequently during the term. The brighter students should be placed in a new class by combining such students from a beginners' class with an intermediate class. The end of one month's instruction ought to show the teacher new lines of grouping.

HELPS

As this work is comparatively new and as the Bureau of Education and Naturalization have been investigating methods and results and publishing the findings some of the best help for those interested in establishing extension classes may be secured from these bureaus.

The Bureau of Education has issued a series of immigrant education letters that take up special phases of the subject. Its bulletins include the following:

- Adult Illiteracy, Bulletin 1916, No. 35.
- Illiteracy in the United States and an Experiment for its Elimination, Bulletin 1913, No. 20.
- Public Facilities for Educating the Alien, Bulletin, 1916, No. 18.
- The Bureau of Naturalization issues the following bulletins:
The Work of the Public Schools with the Bureau of Naturalization, 1917.
- An Outline Course in Citizenship, 1916.
- Syllabus of the Naturalization Law, 1916.
- Proceedings of the First Citizenship Convention, 1917.

The National Americanization Committee at 20 West 34th St., New York City, is prepared to supply circulars and pamphlets on the subject.

The Detroit Board of Commerce issues valuable pamphlets.

SUMMARY.

All school people are urged to assume as part of their war service this year the wiping out of illiteracy in Wisconsin, the Americanization of our aliens, and the extension of education to those whose opportunities have been limited. All are urged to get the work started without delay. The great industrial and commercial development that must follow the present upheaval will call for the best trained people that can be supplied. If our country is to rank high in world progress and if we are to give the help in the countries where trained workers have been exhausted, it is essential that our people develop their abilities to the fullest degree. This means that we must give the best of educational opportunities not only to people of school age but that we must extend these opportunities to those who have passed beyond the reach of compulsory education laws. America has spelled opportunity to the people of the world. America must mean opportunity in its fullest sense to the immigrants when they reach our shores. We must no longer leave the Americanization process to the ingenuity of the alien nor must we leave the question of securing educational opportunities entirely to the illiterate. We must take definite steps to meet these needs.

City superintendents and principals are asked to assume in their cities the responsibility for awakening the public to the need for night schools and to secure appropriations for the work. County superintendents are asked to assume responsibility for the elimination of illiteracy from the villages and districts under their jurisdiction. They are urged to experiment on a small scale. Start at least two or three schools at once. Select the strongest teachers for this experimental work and give them all the help possible. Teachers are urged to cooperate, and where night work is not a part of the regular system, to give their services. Club women and all other public spirited and interested people are invited to cooperate in furthering the extension of special classes for adults.

The state department will be glad to render any assistance possible to those wishing to establish this work.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Education

Washington

Texts in English for Foreigners

- Andronis, Nicholas C.—The fundamentals of the English language for non-English-speaking people.
- Austin, R.—Lessons in English for Foreign Women. American Book Company, 1913; 35c.
- Banks, J. E.—English for adult students of foreign birth. Second edition, 60c. 1914—Ambridge, Pa.
- Berlin, I.—English Method. Wasserman's International Book Store, 45 Clinton Street, New York City.
- Beshgeturian, A.—Foreigners' Guide to English. World Book Company, Yonkers, N. Y., 1914; 60c.
- Beverly, C.—Oral English. Atkinson, Mentzer & Company, 1914, 35c.
- Black, N. F.—English for Non-English. Regina Book Shop, 1913; \$1.00.
- Bohlenius, E. M.—Teaching of Oral English. Second Edition, \$1.00, 1916; Lippincott.
- Bolognese, S.—Economic Interpreter. Caspar, 1908; 50c.
- Bridgeport, Conn.—Public library and reading room. Aids for foreigners learning English. 1916.
- Chancellor, Wm. E.—Standard Short Course for Evening Schools. American Book Company, 1911.
- Chancellor, Wm. E.—Studies in English. American Book Company, 1913.
- Christoff, A. T.—Practical Reader and Guide Book for New Americans. Kansas City, Kans. Distributed by Maunders-Dougherty Company, 1915.
- Clark, H. E.—Foreigners' Manual of English. Harrison; 75c.
- Cole, R. E.—Everyday English for Every Coming American. Y. M. C. A., Cleveland, Ohio, 1914.
- Coveney, Mary E., and Field, S.—English for New Americans. Silver, Burdett & Company, 1911.
- Faustine & Wagner—A New Reader for Evening Schools, Adapted for Foreigners. Hinds, 1909, 50c.
- Field, W. S., and Coveney, M. E.—English for New Americans. Silver, Burdett & Company, 60c.
- Harrington, W. L., and Cunningham, C. J.—First Book for Non-English-Speaking People,—2 books. Language lessons to accompany first book. Heath Pub. Co., 1904.
- Houghton, Frederick—First Lessons in English for Foreigners. American Book Company, 1911, 40c.
- Hulshof—Reading Made Easy for Foreigners. Hinds, 1909. Three volumes, \$1.20.
- Imperieff, Mary—Progressive Lessons in English for Foreigners, First Year. Ginn & Company, 1915.
- Jonas, K.—American Interpreter. Caspar; \$1.50.

- Mintz, F. S.—First Reader for New American Citizens. Macmillan Company, 1910; 50c.
- Mintz, F. S.—The New American Citizen. A Reader for Foreigners.
- Mintz, Frances A.—A Practical Speller for Evening Schools.
- O'Brien, S. R.—English for Foreigners. Houghton, 1909; 50c.
- O'Reilly, M.—English Book for Foreigners. Flanagan; 15c.
- Price—The Direct Method of Teaching English to Foreigners. Beattys & Company, 1913; 45c.
- Prior & Ryan—How to Learn English. A Reader for Foreigners.
- Roberts, P.—English for Coming Americans.—Teachers' Manual. Y. M. C. A., 1909. Lesson leaves—conversation cards.
- Roberts, Peter—English for Coming Americans. Beginners' Reader. Three pages, 20c; 1916—Ass'n Press.
- Sharpe—First Reader for Foreigners. American Book Co., 1911, 40c.
- Shearer, James W.—A Pronouncing Speller for Foreigners. Jenkins, 1915; 35c.
- Swingle, F. B.—English for Evening Schools, Racine Wis.; 35c.
- Tesson, L.—Reading and Conversation. 25c.—1916, Palmer Co.
- Thorley, W. C.—English Reader for Foreign Students. Macmillan, 1913, 65c.
- Thorley, Wilfred C.—Primer of English for Foreign Students. 1910.
- Vitali, A.—Easy Practical Course in English for Foreigners. Vitali, 1911; \$1.00.
- Wallach, J.—Book in English for Foreigners. Two books. Silver Burdett & Co., 1910; 50c.
- Wheeler, Charlotte—A New Speller for Foreigners. Alex. Dulfer Printing Company, 1913; 30c.

**END OF
TITLE**